

INFANTRY LETTERS



USING PSYOP PERSONNEL

I appreciated seeing psychological operations (PSYOPs) mentioned in two separate articles in *INFANTRY*'s July-August 1994 issue: Captain Blaise Cornell-d'Echert's article "We Need a Peacekeeping MTP" (pages 34-35), and Lieutenant James Sisemore's "Cordon and Search" (pages 41-43). I commend both authors for their understanding of the strengths PSYOPs can bring to a ground commander. Granted, once the bullets start flying, PSYOPs are of little help, but what you, as a maneuver commander, do to use them in the time before the shooting, or in operations other than war (OOTW), is worth mentioning.

In regard to Captain Cornell-d'Echert's article, PSYOP assistance should be part of any peacekeeping mission training plan, and in all operations the focus should be on understanding what PSYOP units do and how you can benefit from their actions. Both articles acknowledge that although the Army is downsizing, the number of separate deployments can be expected to increase. Now is the time to plan for and integrate the use of PSYOP assets into the training that is the basis for the conduct of missions and for their degree of success.

Because of the planning pressures on leaders, I want to offer some thoughts to assist in planning and training. These same thoughts might apply to the use of attachments from other sources as well—military police, engineers, or civil affairs.

We're the guys with the loudspeakers blaring to confuse or disrupt an enemy, but we're also the guys with the knowledge to identify the key speakers, or the influential people, within some segment of a local population. And in most OOTW missions, getting a message to

the people who can best influence an outcome is paramount, especially if it involves positively influencing an otherwise uncommitted group or neutralizing an opposing force's negative effect on that group.

Additionally, PSYOPs should be viewed as an alternative source of intelligence. Seldom are PSYOP personnel deployed without some degree of knowledge pertaining to the host nation, surrounding nations, and local populations and their relationships to one another. This knowledge potentially has considerable strategic and tactical value.

Although the combat employment of PSYOP assets is better defined in current doctrine, PSYOPs can be equally valuable in OOTW, and that value is enhanced to the degree that a commander integrates these assets into the planning process. Since today's Army units are more likely to be tasked for OOTW, I encourage you to fully explore the capabilities of PSYOP personnel and the best way to integrate them into contingency and operational plans.

Incorporate PSYOP capabilities into the planning process early. Decide which PSYOP capabilities can help you perform the mission, and define their possible uses. You don't need to plan for every contingency, but you should understand that PSYOP personnel are there to help you create the environment that is most conducive to your success. Link up with them early, and ask what they can do for you.

Chances are that someone in a PSYOP unit is familiar with conditions in the area where you are about to be sent; he can come to your unit, brief you on what he knows, and outline what assistance he can offer. Once he has told you that, he'll step back and let you complete your troop leading procedures. When you want him again, just tell him when and where. He'll advise you on

what he knows of the situation, combatants or noncombatants, and what capabilities he has available. He may also advise you of known capabilities that require formal requests.

PSYOP personnel are committed to serve as a force multiplier for you, and in today's world, that means maximizing the results with minimal resources. So before you put your PSYOP team on guard duty, find out what else they can do to assist you.

The employment of PSYOPs in OOTW evolves with technology. The most visible attribute of today's leader may be his creativity in using all available assets. PSYOP units are committed to accomplishing the mission and to reducing the degree of uncertainty faced by every commander.

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COMBAT MISSIONS COME FIRST IN METLs

How to approach the training and execution of operations other than war (OOTW) is one of the most pressing issues currently facing the Army. Infantry leaders in particular are thrust into the middle of the issue as more and more infantry units are tasked to perform OOTW. After reading the letter headed "Why Not Legitimize OOTW Training?" (*INFANTRY*, July-August 1994, pages 5-6), I decided to join the discussion.

Fighting and winning the nation's wars remains our primary mission. We should, in general, continue to base unit mission essential task lists (METLs) exclusively on warfighting tasks. Although the number of OOTW mis-

sions is increasing, we have to be judicious in the amount of time and other assets we commit to training for this mission. We all know that training for a known mission is the smart thing to do. Everyone would agree that you have to prepare your soldiers for the anticipated mission and conditions. The METL, however, is something completely different.

The nature of the METL acknowledges that Army units do not have the time and resources to gain and maintain proficiency in every potential task. No commander out there believes his unit could deploy and be asked to perform only its METL tasks. So he has always accepted risk on nonessential combat tasks. Each commander must ask himself, "Are OOTW tasks essential, high-payoff tasks worthy of using the limited training resources available? For some units, the answer may be "yes," but for many it may be "no."

As for OOTW training, it is an oversimplification to say OOTW tasks are merely combat tasks conducted under different conditions. But many of the skills honed by combat-related METL training can also serve a unit well when it is called to conduct OOTW. First and foremost, OOTW requires extremely well disciplined troops and competent leadership throughout the chain of command, particularly at small-unit level. Combat training that is well planned, resourced, and executed develops that leadership and soldier discipline, and gives a unit more versatility than does OOTW-specific training.

The writer of the letter mentions that the U.S. Army has executed OOTW for more than 200 years, but in fact the Army has rarely, if ever, dedicated its training to OOTW. For example, Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama rapidly moved from combat into what we now call OOTW. Although OOTW was not a part of our vocabulary back then, the involved units were versatile enough to adjust with no previous training in its execution.

Specific OOTW tasks generally will not serve soldiers and units well when

conducting combat operations. When deciding where we're going to accept that risk in training, consider this: If required, any competent infantry company commander, given a well trained and disciplined unit, can plan, establish, and operate a food distribution site. Certainly, it will be better if the unit has trained and rehearsed this mission, but if the commander has accepted risk in training OOTW, he can still accomplish the mission. The skills honed in combat-related METL training will serve this commander and his unit well. The mission analysis, troop-leading procedures, detailed planning, rehearsals, leadership skills, and soldier discipline required to accomplish the combat-related METL tasks will enable the unit to accomplish this mission.

But consider the other side of the coin: In a unit with limited training resources (mainly time), any OOTW training will divert resources from combat training. If this same unit has been planning to conduct OOTW, it may have executed the food distribution site mission a number of times in training. It has probably learned some valuable lessons, developed an SOP, and become proficient at the task. What happens if the unit is deployed to a warfighting situation or the OOTW has turned into combat operations at company level? When the commander is ordered to execute a night attack or other combat mission, how well will the skills developed during OOTW training serve this unit? Even before OOTW was part of the landscape and we were focusing exclusively on combat training, combat operations were hard to execute to standard. Without well planned, resourced, and executed combat training, this unit will

be unable to execute the combat mission to standard. Most after-action reviews and take-home packages from the combat training centers will confirm our difficulty in achieving and sustaining proficiency at our combat-related METL tasks even before we became entangled in OOTW.

The writer of the letter is mistaken when he alludes to a prohibition in Army doctrine against placing OOTW tasks on a METL. Field Manual 25-101, *Battle Focused Training*, does not prohibit anything from being placed on a METL. If the writer has been told otherwise, that is his commander's philosophy, not Army policy.

Still, although they can be, OOTW tasks generally should not be placed on a METL. Obviously, preparing for contingency missions is prudent and does not violate the spirit and intent of FM 25-101. If a unit is pre-selected for a specific OOTW mission on an "on-order" basis, then perhaps training OOTW tasks makes sense. But training for a specific contingency mission is as far as we should go with OOTW tasks and the METL. Units that are not operating under a specific contingency, or warning order, should continue to focus exclusively on combat-related METL tasks.

We must be careful about how we approach this issue, particularly from a training standpoint. As the letter writer points out, many OOTWs look a lot like combat to the soldier taking fire. For the infantry soldier, the discipline to follow orders, interpret guidance, and execute rules of engagement (ROEs) is a normal part of any operation. (Isn't a trigger line an ROE?). Let's not make this tougher than it is.

I'm not certain how well we can ever anticipate and prepare for the many situations and ROEs that are possible in OOTW, but I'm absolutely certain that we can seriously degrade the warfighting skills of the best-trained army in the world if we do this wrong. Although it is best to train specifically for any given mission or situation, the Army has proved that in a crunch, even without

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prior OOTW training, it *can* successfully conduct OOTW. On the other hand, we know that without adequate combat training we *cannot* successfully execute combat operations.

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BICYCLE INFANTRY

Readers of Captain Kevin D. Stringer's article "Bicycle Infantry: The Swiss Experience" (INFANTRY, September-October 1994, pages 10-12) may be interested to know that infantry soldiers here at Fort Benning trained on bicycles in the early 1940s. The National Infantry Museum collection has photos of infantrymen loading their two-wheeled steeds into a C-47. Additionally, the museum has a World War II British folding bicycle used in airborne operations.

Of greatest interest on this subject are two color prints in the museum collection. One, from the cover of the French newspaper *Le Petit Journal* dated 3 October 1897, shows armed French soldiers mounted on bicycles in "square formation." The other print shows Imperial German officers, complete with spiked helmets, observing training of mastiff dogs attacking dummies dressed in French uniforms and mounted on bicycles.

The museum has a total of four military bicycles in its collection.

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PORTABLE INFANTRY SHOCK WEAPON NEEDED

Recent combat in the former Yugoslavia and in Somalia has again demonstrated the urgent need for an organic infantry direct fire weapon. In

Panama, we had M551 Sheridan tanks for main-gun shock effect. But when helicopters were shot down in Mogadishu, and the relief convoy of soft-skinned vehicles was blocked, the Rangers had no shock weapons to use in regaining fire superiority over an enemy who had more men, more terrain familiarity, better cover and concealment, and unlimited ammunition.

Although combining arms is a desirable goal, the infantry needs back-up weapons to use when artillery and air support cannot be brought to bear for various reasons—enemy action, weather, restrictive terrain, cities, communications difficulties, and political constraints.

Our current hand-held infantry shock weapons—AT4s, LAWs, 90mm recoilless rifles (RRs), and M3 Ranger antiarmor weapon systems—are not effective for pinned-down forces; because the gunners are exposed getting into close-range firing positions, the positions are at best unstable. In addition, their small warheads can do little damage to large buildings.

Vehicle-mounted shock weapons are always ready to fire at the first sign of trouble from a safe standoff distance with enough explosive effect to regain fire dominance. But our current hard-top HMMWVs (high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles) are armed with heavy machineguns that lack instantaneous shock effect. They must be fired continuously for a time to saturate a target. And the TOW missile will not work at close range; it needs at least 65 meters to arm and still more for the gunner to track it to the target. Besides, the TOW is not economical for reducing buildings, bunkers, or enemy infantry, and the tracking time exposes the weapon and its crew to enemy counterfire.

At ground level (airborne, light infantry, Special Forces), we need a fire-and-forget shock weapon that will be there when we need it. That weapon is the M40A2 106mm RR. It is still in the inventory of our Special Forces units for foreign weapon training purposes, and it can be mounted on HMMWVs or other vehicles, as some of our allies have

done. Infantrymen can also ground-mount the M40A2 and tow it into firing position.

The M8 armored gun system is years away from replacing the Sheridan, and the M2 Bradley fighting vehicle is too heavy for scarce airlift capabilities. But three 106mm RR HMMWVs could be airlanded from a C130 or airdropped with two squads of infantry. The new laser SACMFCS (small arms common module fire control system) may be adaptable to the 106mm RR to replace the spotting rifle aiming system for improved accuracy without signature. Hand-held thermal imagers such as the AN/TAS-5 Dragon night tracker could be used with night vision goggles for night driving and firing. In short, the 106mm RR HMMWV could quickly be made "state-of-the-art."

I believe we have an urgent need for the 106mm RR, and it could be filled in a matter of days at little cost. The weapons are now available in storage, along with a large quantity of ammunition, but not for long. They have been slated for destruction.

All that is needed is for airborne, Special Forces, or light infantry unit commanders to request 106mm RRs for their designated M998 soft-top HMMWVs. The units that already have the rifles would need only the gun-mount kits.

MIKE SPARKS
U.S. Army National Guard
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KEEP TO ARMY STANDARDS

I am writing in regard to the item in your Swap Shop in the July-August 1994 issue ("Save Those Old Boots with New Lacing Technique," page 48).

I realize that your magazine "does not necessarily reflect the official Army position" and that what you publish "does not supersede any information presented in other official Army publications," as stated in the inside front cover. The problem is that soldiers seldom read fine print such as this.

Certainly, it is the individual soldier's responsibility to ensure that he maintains the Army standard, but many soldiers who read that item will assume that it's okay now to use 550 cord to lace their boots.

As a senior noncommissioned officer, I spend most of my day making on-the-spot corrections to officers and soldiers and educating them on what the regulation says. You would be surprised by the number of officers and NCOs who don't know the right way to do something because they spend their time reading magazines that publish nonstandard information.

Don't get me wrong. *INFANTRY* is a great magazine. However, I would like to see information that reinforces and updates Army policy, not information that is non-standard.

LARRY GRAHAM
CSM, U.S. Army
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BOOK AUTHOR PROTESTS CHOICE OF REVIEWER

As a journalist for more than two decades, I was shocked by *INFANTRY*'s selection of Lieutenant Colonel Albert Garland (retired) to review my book *Reconciliation Road: A Family Odyssey of War and Honor*, about my grandfather, Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall.

Not only is Garland an interview subject included in the book's text—which should have disqualified him from writing the review—he is also quoted (accurately) in the book from our interview as saying, "I just flatly resented [Marshall]. . . I could never understand Slam's influence. I was against Slam from the beginning."

INFANTRY's readers are the real losers here. A more objective reviewer

could well have assessed the findings in *Reconciliation Road*, the most thorough published treatment yet of Marshall's life and career, one that includes personal interviews with all of the major figures in the Marshall controversy, both supporters and critics. Instead, Garland's animus leads him to spend the first half of the "review" telling readers what he himself thinks about Marshall rather than discussing the book and its findings.

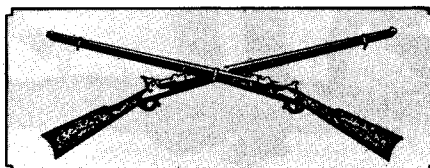
Lastly, I should point out that I served as an Army officer for one year and nine months, then applied for a discharge from the service as a conscientious objector under a rigorous and demanding process set forth in military regulations. I had to convince a battery of Army officers in personal interviews that my religious beliefs were sincere; every one of them recommended approval of my application. Months later, I received an honorable discharge approved at the highest levels of the service (as did 7,492 other COs who were granted honorable discharges during the Vietnam era).

I do not think that receiving an honorable discharge from the military after a process of intense scrutiny should subject us COs to inclusion among, as Garland puts it, "those who chose to turn their backs to their country."

JOHN DOUGLAS MARSHALL
Seattle, Washington

ATTENTION, VETERANS OF TET 1968

Having published six books on the Vietnam War, I am now writing another. The subject is the defense of Saigon, Bien Hoa, Long Binh, and Tan Son Nhut during the 1968 Tet offensive.



The units involved included the 199th Light Infantry Brigade; the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment; Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Cavalry (1st Infantry Division); the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, and the 3d Battalion, 4th Cavalry (25th Infantry Division); Company C, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, and the 2d Battalion, 506th Infantry (101st Airborne Division); the 716th and 720th Military Police Battalions; and the headquarters detachments of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), USARV (U.S. Army in Vietnam), and the II Field Force Vietnam (FFV).

I would greatly appreciate hearing from anyone who served in any of these units during Tet 1968 so we can arrange an interview for the book.

Please write to me at the address below, or call me any time at (314) 645-1867.

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REMAGEN REUNION

A 50th anniversary reunion is scheduled for 7 March 1995, at Remagen, Germany. The planning committee is trying to find every veteran of the "Bridge at Remagen."

If you were there, or if you would just like to share in this event, please send your name and address, and the committee will mail you a short questionnaire to be completed and returned for planning purposes. Returning the questionnaire in no way obligates you to go on the trip or to pay anything.

My address is P.O. Box 8573, South Charleston, WV 25303.

ELVIN F. MARTIN
Bridge of Remagen
Reunion Committee